

10-03-00

A

Please type a plus sign (+) inside this box →

Approved for use through 09/30/2000. OMB 0111-0032

Patent and Trademark Office U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number.

**UTILITY
PATENT APPLICATION
TRANSMITTAL**

(Only for new nonprovisional applications under 37 C.F.R. § 1.53(b))

Attorney Docket No. M&R 3.0-033 CIP

First Inventor or Application Identifier | Steven J. Sculler

Title Method and System For Facilitating
Resellers Transactions

Express Mail Label No.

EL 408438460US

APPLICATION ELEMENTS

See MPEP chapter 600 concerning utility patent application contents.

- Fee Transmittal Form (e.g., PTO/SB/17)
(Submit an original and a duplicate for fee processing)
- Specification [Total Pages 59]
(preferred arrangement set forth below)
 - Descriptive title of the Invention
 - Cross References to Related Applications
 - Statement Regarding Fed sponsored R & D
 - Reference to Microfiche Appendix
 - Background of the Invention
 - Brief Summary of the Invention
 - Brief Description of the Drawings (if filed)
 - Detailed Description
 - Claim(s)
 - Abstract of the Disclosure
- Drawing(s) (35 U.S.C. 113) [Total Sheets 13]
- Oath or Declaration [Total Pages 2]

- Newly ~~executed~~ (original or copy)
- Copy from a prior application (37 C.F.R. § 1.63(d))
(for continuation/divisional with Box 16 completed)
 - DELETION OF INVENTOR(S)**
Signed statement attached deleting inventor(s) named in the prior application, see 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.63(d)(2) and 1.33(b).

[*NOTE FOR ITEMS 1 & 13: IN ORDER TO BE ENTITLED TO PAY SMALL ENTITY FEES, A SMALL ENTITY STATEMENT IS REQUIRED (37 C.F.R. § 1.27), EXCEPT IF ONE FILED IN A PRIOR APPLICATION IS RELIED UPON (37 C.F.R. § 1.28).]

- If a **CONTINUING APPLICATION**, check appropriate box, and supply the requisite information below and in a preliminary amendment.

<input type="checkbox"/> Continuation	<input type="checkbox"/> Divisional	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Continuation-in-part (CIP)	of prior application No. 09/658,971
---------------------------------------	-------------------------------------	--	-------------------------------------

Prior application information: Examiner not assigned Group / Art Unit not assigned

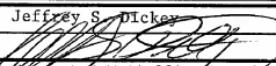
For **CONTINUATION or DIVISIONAL APPS only**: The entire disclosure of the prior application, from which an oath or declaration is supplied under Box 4b, is considered a part of the disclosure of the accompanying continuation or divisional application and is hereby incorporated by reference. The incorporation can only be relied upon when a portion has been inadvertently omitted from the submitted application parts.

17. CORRESPONDENCE ADDRESS

<input type="checkbox"/> Customer Number or Bar Code Label	00530	<input type="checkbox"/> Correspondence address below
--	-------	---

(Insert Customer No. or Attach bar code label here)

Name			
Address			
City	State	Zip Code	
Country	Telephone		Fax

Name (Print/Type)	Jeffrey S. Dickey	Registration No. (Attorney/Agent)	35,858
Signature			Date 10/02/00

Burden Hour Statement: This form is estimated to take 0.2 hours to complete. Time will vary depending upon the needs of the individual case. Any comments on the amount of time you are required to complete this form should be sent to the Chief Information Officer, Patent and Trademark Office, Washington, DC 20231. DO NOT SEND FEES OR COMPLETED FORMS TO THIS ADDRESS. SEND TO: Assistant Commissioner for Patents, Box Patent Application, Washington, DC 20231.

Under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number.

FEE TRANSMITTAL for FY 2001

Patent fees are subject to annual revision

TOTAL AMOUNT OF PAYMENT (\$ 1,462.00)

Complete if Known

Application Number	
Filing Date	HEREWITH
First Named Inventor	STEVEN J. SCULLER
Examiner Name	
Group Art Unit	
Attorney Docket No.	M&R 3.0-033 CIP

09/677153
10/02/00

METHOD OF PAYMENT (check one)

1. The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge indicated fees and credit any overpayments to

Deposit Account Number	12-1095
Deposit Account Name	Lerner, David, et al.

Charge Any Additional Fee Required
Under 37 CFR 1.16 and 1.17
See 37 CFR 1.40

Applicant claims small entity status

2. Payment Enclosed:

Check Credit card Money Order Other

FEE CALCULATION

1. BASIC FILING FEE

Large Entity	Small Entity
Fee Code (\$)	Fee Code (\$)
101 710 201 355	Utility filing fee
106 320 208 160	Design filing fee
107 490 207 245	Plant filing fee
108 710 208 355	Reissue filing fee
114 150 214 75	Provisional filing fee
SUBTOTAL (1) (\$)	

Fee Paid

710.

2. EXTRA CLAIM FEES

Total Claims	44	-20** =	24	Fee from below	Fee Paid
Independent Claims	1	-3** =	4	$\times 18$	$= 432.$
Multiple Dependent					

**or number previously paid, if greater; For Reissues, see below

Large Entity	Small Entity
Fee Code (\$)	Fee Code (\$)
103 18 203 9	Claims in excess of 20
102 80 202 40	Independent claims in excess of 3
104 270 204 135	Multiple dependent claim, if not paid
109 80 209 40	Reissue independent claims over original patent
110 18 210 9	Reissue claims in excess of 20 and over original patent
SUBTOTAL (2) (\$ 752.	

3. ADDITIONAL FEES

Large Entity	Small Entity
Fee Code (\$)	Fee Code (\$)
105 130 205 65	Surcharge - late filing fee or oath
127 50 227 25	Surcharge - late provisional filing fee or cover sheet
139 130 139 130	Non-English specification
147 2,520 147 2,520	For filing a request for ex parte reexamination
112 920* 112 920*	Requesting publication of SIR prior to Examiner action
113 1,840* 113 1,840*	Requesting publication of SIR after Examiner action
115 110 215 55	Extension for reply within first month
116 390 216 195	Extension for reply within second month
117 890 217 445	Extension for reply within third month
118 1,390 218 695	Extension for reply within fourth month
128 1,890 228 945	Extension for reply within fifth month
119 310 219 155	Notice of Appeal
120 310 220 155	Filing a brief in support of an appeal
121 270 221 135	Request for oral hearing
138 1,510 138 1,510	Petition to institute a public use proceeding
140 110 240 55	Petition to reissue - unavoidable
141 1,240 241 620	Petition to reissue - unintentional
142 1,240 242 620	Utility issue fee (or reissue)
143 440 243 220	Design issue fee
144 600 244 300	Plant issue fee
122 130 122 130	Petitions to the Commissioner
123 50 123 50	Petitions related to provisional applications
126 240 126 240	Submission of Information Disclosure Stmt
581 40 581 40	Recording each patent assignment per property (times number of properties)
146 710 246 355	Filing a submission after final rejection (37 CFR § 1.129(g))
149 710 249 355	For each additional invention to be examined (37 CFR § 1.129(h))
179 710 279 355	Request for Continued Examination (RCE)
169 900 169 900	Request for expedited examination of a design application

Other fee (specify) _____

SUBTOTAL (3) (\$)

* Reduced by Basic Filing Fee Paid

Complete if applicable

Name (Print/Type)	Jeffrey S. Dickey	Registration No. Attorney/Agent	35,858	Telephone	908-654-5000
Signature	Date 10/02/00				

WARNING: Information on this form may become public. Credit card information should not be included on this form. Provide credit card information and authorization on PTO-2038.

Burden Hour Statement: This form is estimated to take 0.2 hours to complete. Time will vary depending upon the needs of the individual case. Any comments on the amount of time you are required to complete this form should be sent to the Chief Information Officer, U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, Washington, DC 20231. DO NOT SEND FEES OR COMPLETED FORMS TO THIS ADDRESS. SEND TO: Assistant Commissioner for Patents, Washington, DC 20231.

METHOD AND SYSTEM FOR FACILITATING RESELLER TRANSACTIONS

5 The present application is a continuation-in-part of United States Patent Application 09/658,977 filed September 11, 2000 listing the same inventors which in turn claimed the benefit of United States Provisional Patent Application Nos. 60/214,632, filed June 28, 2000,
10 and 60/153,183, filed September 10, 1999, listing the same inventors. The disclosure of all of the foregoing applications are hereby incorporated by reference.

15 A portion of the disclosure of this patent document contains material which is subject to copyright protection. The copyright owner has no objection to the facsimile reproduction by anyone of the patent document or the patent disclosure, as it appears in the Patent and Trademark Office patent file or records, but otherwise reserves all copyright rights whatsoever.

20 **BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION**

Computerized systems have long been used in connection with the ordering and selling of products and services. However, typically, the systems are designed to handle a single level in any channel of trade. For 25 example, a web site may have product-ordering software

which allows the consumer to order products on-line. In turn, the seller will typically use a different computer program to order products from its own vendors. The vendors, in turn, may have their own suppliers who also 5 have their own product-ordering software.

While some companies may optimize their databases so that they can automatically generate purchase orders based upon automated customer requests, such software often needs to overcome the different 10 formats required by the different software programs. The inefficiencies of such a system is increased by the fact that each entity will have its own separate product ordering and supply ordering software, with the concomitant need to convert their data from one format to 15 another.

The disadvantages of such prior art systems are particularly manifest in products that contain personalized information, such as the typesetting associated with the impression of a stamp. Typically a 20 customer will call or fax in an order. The reseller will write down the information and then typeset it or pass it on to another manufacturer. Thus, the image is sent up the chain of distribution until it finally reaches the company that makes the part containing the typesetting.

Each of these steps leads to possible errors in the personalization. The image might go through many conversions, be it from paper to facsimile to one electronic format to another electronic form. Each 5 conversion or handling by an intermediary entity increases the possibility of error.

Accordingly, there is a need for a centralized system serving the needs of multiple entities across a particular channel of trade which can automatically 10 generate customer and supply orders in response to customer requests. There is a further need for a system which can resolve the accuracies inherent in ordering personalized products.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

15 The invention is directed to those needs.

One embodiment of the invention provides a computer-implemented method of retrieving product distribution information. One step includes storing first and second relationship information. Relationship 20 information identifies a buyer, a seller and a product to be provided from the seller to the buyer. The first relationship information identifies a first entity as the buyer, a second entity as the seller, and a first product as the product. The second relationship information

identifies the second entity as the buyer, a third entity as the seller and the first product as the product.

Other steps include retrieving the first relationship information and then retrieving the second 5 relationship information. The second relationship information is retrieved based on the identity of the seller and the identity of the product contained in the first relationship information.

Preferably, the method also includes storing 10 and retrieving third relationship information, where third relationship information identifies the third entity as the buyer and yet another entity, the fourth entity as the seller. The third relationship information also identifies the product.

15 In one aspect, the first product is a part of a second product, and the first relationship identifies a product containing the part.

Desirably, the relationship information includes the compensation which the seller agrees to 20 accept for the product from the buyer. The compensation may be the price of the product or a commission.

It is not necessary for the first entity to represent only a single company or person. Rather, the first entity identified by the first relationship may be

a class of entities, such as the general public. The step of retrieving the first relationship information may include displaying to the first entity at least two products associated with those relationships identifying 5 the first entity as the buyer. The first relationship information is retrieved based upon the product selected by the particular member of the class.

Advantageously, the method includes the step of storing a description of the product. The may be an 10 image, a textual description, or an image and a textual description.

It is also preferable for the method to include the step of the first entity requesting the first product from the second entity and storing the request. A 15 request for the first product by the second entity to the third entity is also stored based on the second relationship information that was retrieved. The third entity may be notified of the request, and the request may include the quantity and shipping destination(s) of 20 the product.

The step of retrieving the second relationship information may comprise searching for relationships for wherever the buyer of the relationships being searched identifies the seller of the first relationship, and the

product of the relationships being searched identifies the product of the first relationship.

Desirably, the method also includes the steps of storing additional relationships associated with the 5 product and repeating the step of retrieving the second relationship. The step is repeated by recursively assuming that some of the values of the first relationship are equal to the values of the second relationship. The repeating step terminates when there 10 is no relationship identifying the seller of the second relationship as a buyer of the same product in another relationship.

Another embodiment of the invention comprises a computer-implemented method of providing information 15 about a product including typesetting. The method includes storing data representing (a) a typesetting-related product that is available from a first member to a class of customers the product including typesetting and (b) an agreement by a second member to provide the 20 product to the first member. The method further includes receiving a request for the product from a customer of the class whereby the request includes information describing the typesetting. The customer request is stored and the agreement is retrieved based on the

identity of the product and the first member associated with the customer's request. A second request is then generated whereby the second member is requested to provide the product to the first member. The second 5 request also identifies the typesetting information. The second request is then transmitted to the second member.

The class of customers may actually include only a single entity.

Preferably, the method further includes storing 10 data representing an agreement by a third member to provide the product to the second member. This agreement is retrieved based on the identity of the product and the identity of the second member.

The typesetting information may comprise an 15 image. In one aspect, a plurality of requests are received from a plurality of customers in the class and the image associated with one customer's request is different from the image associated with another customer's request. When the customer requests are 20 stored, the different images may be stored in the same file format or different file formats. The method may include the steps of (a) converting the image from the stored file format to a different file format and then (b) the second member retrieving the image. If the

images are stored in different file formats, the stored file formats are preferably stored in formats corresponding with the file formats used by the members.

5 In another aspect, the product is a stamp, the typesetting relates to the impression on the stamp, and method includes the additional step of manufacturing the product.

Desirably, the requests identify the typesetting information by reference to information 10 stored in a database and the customer request is received over a global telecommunications network such as the Internet, the World Wide Web or an intranet.

Yet another embodiment of the invention provides a computer-implemented method of retrieving 15 information. The method includes storing first relationship information and second relationship information. The first relationship information identifies a first entity as the buyer, a second entity as the seller, and a first product as the product. The second relationship information identifies the second entity as the buyer, a third entity as the seller, and a second product as the product. Both the first relationship information and second relationship 20 information are retrieved, however, the second

relationship information is retrieved based on the identity of the seller identified in the first relationship information.

In a further embodiment of the invention, a 5 system is used to store information about buyers and sellers of products. The system includes a database containing a plurality of relationship records. The system also includes a processor for retrieving a second relationship record based on a first relationship record, 10 whereby the buyer entity identified in the second relationship record is the same entity as the seller identified in the second relationship record, and whereby the product identified in the second relationship record is related to the product identified in the first 15 relationship record. Preferably, the database is stored at a central location on a single server.

In yet a further embodiment, a system is maintained by an administrator and used to store information about the relationships between buyers and 20 sellers. The system includes data representing an agreement by a middle entity to provide a product to a bottom entity in exchange for compensation and an agreement by a top entity to provide a related product to the middle entity in exchange for compensation, none of

the entities being the administrator. They system also includes a processor for utilizing the data to process a request for the product from the bottom entity to the middle entity such that the request generates a request 5 for the product from the middle entity to the top entity. Desirably, the data further comprises another agreement by another entity to provide the product to the top entity.

In still another embodiment, a computer-
10 implemented method is provided for retrieving information relating to a request for personalized products. The method includes storing an agreement by a second entity to provide a product to a first entity and storing an agreement by a third entity to provide the product to the 15 second entity. The first entity requests the product from the second entity such that the request includes modifying the product in accordance with personalization information provided by the first entity. The personalization information is particular to the first 20 entity. A request for the product from the second entity to third entity is then generated. The request is generated based on the stored agreements and includes the personalization information. The personalization information may be an image.

Another embodiment provides of a computer-implemented method of selling products over the worldwide web. It includes providing a database which centrally stores agreements between a plurality of 5 members selling a product. It also includes: sending a web page from a first member to a customer, the web page identifying a product that is the subject of one of the agreements of the database; receiving a request for the product from the customer, the request including an image 10 provided by the customer; generating a first purchase order from the first member to a second member based on a second agreement stored in the database, the purchase order including the image; and generating a second purchase order from the second member to a third member 15 based on a third agreement stored in the database, the purchase order including the image. The method may also include the step of storing the agreements by sending information relating to the agreements to the database via the Internet.

20 Although all of the methods speak of products, it should be understood that a product as used in the context of this specification may also refer to a service or a product and a service.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Figure 1 is diagram of a system in accordance with one embodiment of the invention.

5 Figure 2 is a diagram of a Reseller Database in accordance with one embodiment of the invention.

Figure 3 is a diagram of a Relationship Table in accordance with another embodiment of the invention.

10 Figure 4 is a diagram of a Relationship Table and a Transactional Table in accordance with yet another embodiment of the invention.

Figure 5 is a screen display in accordance with one embodiment of the invention. FIGURE 6 is a screen display of a list of products ordered by a customer in accordance with a further embodiment of the invention.

15 FIGURE 7 is a screen display of a receipt page in accordance with a further embodiment of the invention.

FIGURE 8 is a screen display of an order status page in accordance with a further embodiment of the invention.

20 FIGURE 9 is a screen display for entering personalization information in accordance with yet a further embodiment of the invention.

FIGURE 10 is a screen display for locking and unlocking aspects of personalization information in

accordance with yet a further embodiment of the invention.

FIGURE 11 is a screen display for entering personalization information after the information 5 contained in the screen display of Figure 10 has been processed.

FIGURE 12 is a screen display for entering personalization information, including a graphical logo, in accordance with yet a further embodiment of the 10 invention.

FIGURE 13 is a screen display for locking and unlocking aspects of personalization information, including a graphical logo, in accordance with yet a further embodiment of the invention.

15 FIGURE 14 is a screen display for entering personalization information after the information contained in the screen display of Figure 13 has been processed.

20 DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

As shown in FIGURE 1, a system 50 in accordance with one embodiment of the invention comprises a network of computers such as end user personal computer 60 which communicates with web servers 70-72 via Internet 80.

Although only a few computers are depicted in FIGURE 1, it should be appreciated that a typical system can include a large number of connected computers. Preferably, end user computer 60 is a general purpose computer having all the internal components normally found in a personal computer such as, for example, central processing unit (CPU) 61, display 62, CD-ROM 63, hard-drive 64, mouse 65, keyboard 66, speakers 67, microphone 68, modem 69 and all of the components used for connecting these elements to one another. End user computer 60 communicates with the Internet 80 via modem 69. End user computer 60 may comprise any work station capable of processing instructions and transmitting data to and from humans and other computers, including PDA's with modems and Internet-capable wireless phones.

Web servers 70-72 contain hardware for sending and receiving information over the World Wide Web, such as web pages or files. The web servers 70-72 may be typical web servers or any computer network server or other automated system capable of communicating with other computers over a network, including the Internet, wide area networks or local area networks. For example,

the system described above in connection with end user computer 60 may also function as a web server.

Particularly, administrative web server 70 contains a processor 90, a set of instructions 80 which 5 are executed by processor 90, and a variety of data such as Reseller Database 100. Preferably, the instructions 80 are stored as a program on the hard drive of the administrative server 70 and contain routines, such as functions and methods, for handling input/output and for 10 accessing and manipulating the data in the database. The routines of the program are explained in more detail below.

Reseller Database 100 stores agreements and transactions between the entities served by the system 50 15 (hereafter "members") and the public. Preferably, the database is relational and contains multiple tables containing multiple records.

As shown in Figure 2, one of those tables is Member Table 110. Member Table 110 stores information 20 about the individual members. Each member occupies a record in the Member Table and the record includes the member's name 111 and biographical information such as the member's address 113, the nature of its business and the like. By way of example, record 115 of Member

Table 110 may contain information about a company known as "Retailer A" whose name is stored in Name field 111 and whose address of 1 Main Street is stored in Address field 112. Exemplary records 116-18 correspond with 5 three different companies having three different names (such as Broker B, Distributor C, Manufacturer D) and addresses.

Information regarding relationships between the members is also stored in Reseller Database 100. These 10 relationships may include agreements to buy and sell products on pre-identified terms. For exemplary purposes only, this embodiment shall be discussed in the context of the following hypothetical business arrangement. Retailer A is a retailer that sells personalized products 15 on-line by mail and one of those products shall be considered to be a stamp known as Product #1. Retailer A sells the product to the public for \$12. As is typical for retailers, Reseller A does not manufacture Product #1, but, rather, buys Product #1 for \$10 from 20 another company, Broker B. Broker B, in turn, may simply be a broker for Product #1 and arranges delivery for Product #1 to Retailer A from a distributor, Distributor C, for which Broker B pays Distributor C \$8.

Distributor C, in turn, buys Product #1 from the ultimate manufacturer, Manufacturer D, for \$6.

Relationship Table 120 of Reseller Database 100 stores this contractual information in records 131-134.

5 Each record contains a number of fields such that Product field 121 identifies the product, Seller field 122 identifies the seller, Buyer field 123 identifies the buyer, Price field 124 identifies the price, and Ship To field 125 contains information about where the product
10 should be shipped. For example, the relationship between Distributor C and Manufacturer D is stored in record 134 such that the Product field 121 has the value "Product #1", seller field 122 has the value "Manufacturer D", buyer field 123 has the value
15 "Distributor C", price field 124 has the value \$6, and Ship To field 125 has the value "Distributor C" because the product is shipped from Manufacturer D to Distributor C. The ID field 126 contains a value that uniquely identifies that particular relationship. The
20 other relationships are similarly stored in Agreements Table 120.

Some companies are not only buyers, but they are also sellers. Relationship Table 120 stores both aspects. For example, the exemplary agreement between

Broker B and Distributor C is stored in record 133 with the following values:

Product 121	Seller 122	Buyer 123	Price 124	Ship To 125	ID 126
Product #1	Distributor C	Broker B	\$8	Retailer A	23

It will be noted that the Ship To field contains a
5 different value than the buyer field, which reflects the
fact that Broker B never actually receives the product.
Rather the product is shipped directly from Distributor C
to Retailer A, even though Broker B is paying the
Distributor C the price of \$8.

10 It is not always possible to know, in advance,
the value of every field before a product is ordered.
For example, while Retailer A knows that it will charge
the public \$12 for Product #1, it does not know until the
time-of-sale who the purchaser is or where it will be
15 shipped. In this instance, Relationship Table 120
contains codes which identify the missing information,
such as:

Product 121	Seller 122	Buyer 123	Price 124	Ship To 125	ID 126
Product #1	Retailer A	Public	\$12	Prompt	1

whereby "Public" means that any member of the public may
20 be a buyer and "Prompt" means that system will prompt the
buyer for the information at the time of sale.

Accordingly, the system allows a retailer with a standard set of retail prices to store its retail prices in the database for public viewing even though the buyer's identity is unknown. Moreover, rather than defining the 5 potential buyer as the entire public, other codes could be used to limit the potential buyers to a subset of the public or particular class of entities (such as "stamp retailers").

Reseller Database 100 also contains a table for 10 centrally storing information about the products. Products Table 140 contains records whereby each record contains a Name field 141 for storing the name of the product, a Picture field 142 for storing a picture and a Description field 143 for storing a textual description 15 of the product. Records 145 and 146 of Figure 2 illustrate exemplary values.

Reseller Database 100 further contains another table for recording transactions facilitated by the system, namely Transaction Table 150. Records in the 20 Transaction Table contain a reference to the agreement under which the transaction was made as well as fields devoted to the particulars of the transaction, such as the number of products sold, the total price and where the product should be shipped. These values are stored

in the following respective fields: Relationship ID 151, Quantity 152, Total Price 153, and Ship To 155.

Preferably, Reseller Database 100 stores its information using conventional database storage products 5 and query formats, such as products by Oracle, PICK and Universal. The system may conduct the searches using SQL. However, the database may contain information in any format, such as XML. Thus, a "record" refers to any item, or collection of items, of information in the 10 database.

In accordance with the embodiment of the system described above, the invention may be operated as follows.

User 60 visits a web site relating to 15 Retailer A and hosted by administrator server 70 and requests to see a list of all the products carried by the retailer.

Pursuant to instructions 80, processor 90 searches Relationship Table 120 for all records listing 20 the particular retailer in Seller field 122 and the string "Public" in the Buyer field 123. A list of matching products is compiled and shown to the potential customer using the information contained in the Product Table 140, namely the product's name, picture and

description. The price is obtained from the Price field 124 of Relationship Table 120 and is also shown to the user. Using the foregoing example, records 131-32 of Relationship Table 120 and records 145-46 of Product 5 Table 140 may have been pulled and displayed on a web browser such as shown in Figure 5.

When the user orders the product, the selected product is matched to the particular relationship. In the embodiment shown in Figure 5, the product information 10 is shown separately for each relationship, i.e. product 401 shown in Figure 5 corresponds with relationship record 131 of Figure 2 and product 402 shown in Figure 5 corresponds with relationship record 135 of Figure 2. Accordingly, the relationship may be found 15 simply by allowing the user to click on one of the pictures and sending this information to administrative server 70. In a manner well known to those of ordinary skill in the art, other information would also be collected such as the quantity desired, how payment will 20 be made and where the product should be shipped.

The order is then stored in Transaction Table 150 by creating a record containing: the relationship pursuant to which the transaction was made, the quantity of product, the total amount paid, and where

the product should be shipped. Using the foregoing example, if user 60 purchased 2 units of Product #1, record 157 will contain the following values: Relationship ID field 151 contains a value equal to the 5 value contained in ID field 126 of record 131; Number Of Products field 152 contains the value 2; Total Price field 153 contains the value \$24; and Ship To field 155 contains the user address.

Instructions 80 next determine whether the 10 seller buys the product from another member of the system. One manner in which this search may be conducted is for processor 90 to search for all records in the Relationship Table 120 where the name in Buyer field 123 matches the seller, and the product in Product field 121 15 matches the product. Using the foregoing example, processor 90 will pull record 132 of Relationship Table 120 because the buyer in record 132, "Retailer A" matches the seller, also "Retailer A", from the previous transaction record 131.

20 If a record in Relationship Table 120 is found showing that the current seller is also a buyer of the same product, then the system automatically generates a new transaction using information already stored in the system. One manner in which this may be done is to

create a new record in Transaction Table 150 using the information from the latest record found in the Relationship Table 120 and the previously stored record in Transaction Table 150. By way of the foregoing 5 example, instructions 80 store a new record 158 in Transaction Table 150 such that the quantity 152 is the same as the quantity from the previous transaction (record 157) and the remaining information (Agreement ID 51, Quantity 142, Total Price 153 and Ship To 155, as 10 applicable) are all pulled and computed from the record just found in Relationship Table 120 (record 132).

Once the new transaction is stored, the process repeats, namely, processor 90 continues to search Relationship Table 120 to see if the seller in the latest 15 transaction is also listed as a buyer for the same product. If so, a new transaction is generated and the processor searches Relationship Table 120 again to see if the latest seller is also a buyer of the same product. Records 133-134 would thus be pulled and new transaction 20 records created accordingly. In one embodiment, the system stops searching when it is unable to find any record of any entity selling that particular product to the then-current seller. There is substantially no limit

to the length of the chain of transactions generated by a single order.

During or after the records are added to the Transaction Table 150, notifications of the transactions 5 are sent to the members of the system so that the orders can be filled. Preferably, the system sends the information in a format consistent with the members' own product management software so that the orders can be filled with minimal human intervention. However, the 10 notification may be made in other ways, such as by sending the members an e-mail each time they are involved in a transaction or periodic hard-copy reports.

Accordingly, when a member orders a product, the system automatically arranges a transaction based on 15 previously-arranged business terms.

In yet another embodiment, the system also handles personalized products. For example, the end-user may upload a personalized image which the user wishes to appear on the products, such as the impression on a 20 stamp. One manner in which this may be carried out is to add a Personalization field 2128 to the Relationship Table 2120 as shown in Figure 4. If the field contains the value "Picture", then the system will prompt the

buyer to upload a picture at the time the product is ordered.

The uploaded picture is then stored in the personalization field 2152 of a new record 2157 in 5 Transaction Table 2150. When a member is informed of the transaction, the system provides the member with a pointer or reference to the stored image. Accordingly and advantageously, the image is not sent to entities that do not need it.

10 Preferably, all of the images are converted and stored in a single format. Prior art systems may have required a single company to maintain and use a different image converter for each imaging format used by its customers and vendors. In fact, the same image may have 15 been converted to different formats many different times as the purchase order was passed up the chain. By storing all images in the database in a single format, the members need only know how to convert the image from one format—the system's—into their own. Indeed, the 20 system preferably stores the member's particular imaging format in the respective record of Member Table 110 and automatically performs the conversion when the member accesses the image.

It is not necessary for the personalized information to be limited to images. The personalized information may also include information particular to the customer, like their name and address. Thus, the 5 system can accommodate requests for product modifications that are not pre-stored in the system. In other words, while systems may be pre-configured for well-known options such as product color and size, the system of the invention is capable of automatically creating a cascade 10 of purchase orders containing unanticipated product modifications (like the exact image to be placed on a stamp) particular to the ultimate customer.

The ability to transfer personalized information capitalizes on yet another advantage of the 15 invention: nearly all of the data can be transmitted electronically. By electronically storing and passing along personalization information, it is not necessary to recreate typesetting or design at different levels of the chain of distribution.

20 The features of personalization, uploading of images and pipelining purchase orders work together to provide yet another advantage of the invention, namely to ability to order accurate typesetting on-line. In another embodiment of the invention, the customer uploads

a picture, graphic file or other information representing typesetting. For example, a typeset image may be created on-line as part of the process of a selecting a particular stamp, whereby the typesetting represents the 5 impression made by the stamp. The system then converts the typesetting information into either a default graphic file format or the format needed for by the manufacturer to create the product. The typesetting and design, which was created by the end user, is then centrally stored in 10 the database and made available to the members of the system as described above.

Because the end user has done their own personalization and the manufacturer gets the graphic file from the database regardless of how many resellers 15 the order may be passed through, the chance of error is greatly diminished. The ability to upload and centrally store typesetting information provides more advantages than simply decreasing errors. It saves time because it is not necessary to re-typeset and design the 20 personalization by the manufacturer. Moreover, it avoids the labor required to pass that information on through reseller channels to the manufacturer. The accuracy of the automated system provides for streamlined operations and faithful reproductions of the end users design.

The typesetting-related aspect is not limited to stamps. Rather, it can be used with any typesetting-related product such as printed items or signs. For example, the invention could be used to order advertising specialties such as printed plates and the like.

The personalization information may also be sent back to the user for confirmation or information purposes. It is well known in the art to provide on-line customers with a list of the products they are purchasing, such as a "virtual shopping basket." However, the present invention provides the additional advantage of showing the personalization information in a list of products ordered by the user. This information could also be provided during the notification process discussed above.

As shown in Figure 6, after the user is finished placing their order or upon the user's request, administrative server 70 sends a web page 500 containing a list of all of the products ordered by the customer. By way of example, each item in the list includes: a picture 501 of the product, a description 502, the quantity 504, an option 506 to delete the product from the order, an option 509 to modify the personalization and an option 508 to obtain further information. Each

item in the list further includes not only a picture of the product, but also a graphic 507 which represents the personalization information.

The display of personalization information to 5 the user has a number of advantages. On the outside, all of the product pictures 501 (in this case, stamps) may look the same. Therefore, while a product picture conveys useful information about the product being ordered, the display of the personalization information 10 507 associated with each product allows the users to further differentiate the products in the order. Displaying the personalization information 507 also has the advantage of making the option 509 to modify the personalization more helpful.

15 The display of personalization information may be used in product lists as well. For example, personalization information 510 may be listed on a receipt page 511 as shown in Figure 7 and, thus, helps a user insure a proper accounting record of the purchases.

20 Personalization information 516 may also be shown on an order status page 515 as shown in Figure 8. The personalization is used to preview the order status. Without the personalization image, it may be difficult to know which item is referred to in the order status. For

example, the two different "Mara" items 517 and 518 have different statuses: one is "in manufacturing" and the other is "released to manufacturing", respectively. The order status page also provides options 519 and 520 to 5 reorder the product (one as is and the other with modifications, respectively). Since the preview is shown on this page, it is easy to select the correct personalization. In another embodiment, the personalization information 507 may also be displayed in 10 textual form.

One manner of uploading the personalization information and preventing unauthorized or unintended changes is shown in Figures 9-14. When making personalizations that need to be repeated, it is often 15 preferred that fields that should not be changed be locked to prevent accidental changes in the design format. Personalizations often need to fit certain requirements for uniformity from government agencies, local requirements and corporate requirements. Large 20 companies often require that use of the company logo in personalizations be uniform so that the company look is the same from product to product. Personalization may also need to conform to requirements for electronic scanning devices, a size to fit a form, or any other

reason to keep design criteria the same. In addition, a user may simply wish to prevent previously-entered information from being changed in order to prevent inadvertent errors.

5 Figure 9 illustrates a web page for entering personalization information for a stamp. The page displays personalization criteria 901-904 for the stamp. In this example, each criteria includes certain aspects such as the content (e.g. the text to be displayed),
10 font, font size, font style, position and alignment.

In Figure 9, the various aspects of criteria 901-904 are currently unlocked, i.e. the values of the aspects can be changed by the user. Accordingly, the user may change all of the text and other information
15 contained in personalization information 905.

However, there may be a reason to prevent certain fields from being changed, such as the company name and address contained in "Text Line A1" field 901 and "Text Line A2" field 903, respectively. For
20 example, if that information remains constant across a large number of stamps, the user may want to prevent inadvertent changes to that information. On the other hand, the other fields may change from stamp to stamp, such as the particular company office and employee

identification number contained in "Text Line B1" criteria 903 and "Text Line B2" criteria 904. Indeed, only some of the aspects may change from stamp to stamp. For example, the font size, style, and position of the 5 company office and employee identification may need to stay the same even though the actual text or content may change.

Accordingly, when the user selects the lock/unlock button 906, administrative server 70 sends a 10 web page to the user which lists the criteria and aspects requesting which may be locked or unlocked. An example of such a web page 910 is shown in Figure 10. The page lists the various criteria 911-916 as well as aspects of the criteria including position 920, size 921, content 15 922 and style 923. For each aspect, the user is allowed to choose (such as by clicking checkbox 917) whether the particular aspect is locked or unlocked. In the example shown in Page 910, the only criteria aspects that are not locked are the content aspects 922 of Text Line B1 20 criteria 915 and Text Line B2 criteria 916. The other aspects of those criteria, such as position 920 and size 921, are locked. When the "Update and Save" button 924 is clicked, the page is sent to administrative server 70 and the server stores the information.

The next time the user accesses the personalization page, the user will not be able to change the locked aspects of the personalization criteria unless the user goes back to web page 910 and unlocks the 5 aspects again. For example, as shown in page 930 in Figure 11, the only criteria aspects that are capable of accepting information via the page are textboxes 931 and 932, which correspond with the content of Text Line B1 and Text Line B2.

10 Preferably, the page which permits the locking and unlocking of information is always available to every user within an organization. Rather, it may be limited to only certain people within an organization, such as the system administrator or others with access to the 15 personalizations of the user. In such an embodiment, different users would be provided with different logins or passwords, and those logins or passwords are used to determine whether a user has the ability to lock or unlock all or some of the aspects.

20 It is not necessary to limit the locking/unlocking feature to text. For example, Figure 12 illustrates a web page 940 with criteria 941 which allows the file and size of logo 942 to be changed, Figure 13 illustrates a web page 950 which allows the

user to lock the logo field including the file (content 945) and size 944, and Figure 14 illustrates a web page 960 with all of the logo criteria 961 being locked.

5 Nearly any aspect of any personalization criteria may be locked. By way of example, other aspects may include color, quantity, paper stock or any other variable that would a user or organization would like to lock.

10 The system is also flexible enough to handle many different pricing schemes. Rather than storing fixed prices in field 124, the field may contain a formula. A commission may be represented as a percentage multiplied by the Total Price 153 stored in the corresponding transaction record.

15 Moreover, the prices can be set and controlled by the database administrator. This is particularly advantageous when the system is primarily directed to the sale of the database administrator's goods.

20 On the other hand, the system may be configured to allow the members to create and store their own agreements. In this embodiment, instructions 80 include routines which allow a member ("the proposing member") to enter a proposed relationship with another member. If the other member implicated by the proposed relationship

provides the system with confirmation, then the system will store the relationship in the system. Accordingly, members are allowed to store agreements without intervention by the entity operating the administrative 5 server 70. Resellers can negotiate independently to determine their prices, terms and conditions but, when their information is stored in the system's database, the resellers still obtain the advantages of participating in the system.

10 Yet another advantage of the invention is that it is not limited to complete products. Most manufacturers purchase one or more of a product's parts from different parties. The system may be configured such that purchase orders for products automatically 15 generate purchase orders for the constituent parts. For example, as shown in Figure 3, the Relationship Table 1120 may have a Bill of Material field 1127. In accordance with the operation discussed above, when the processor 90 pulls a record from Relationship Table 120, 20 it checks the Bill of Material field 1127 to see if the sale of the product involves the sale of individual parts as well. If Bill of Material field 1127 is not null, then instead of checking whether the seller is also listed as a buyer in a different relationship record for

the entire product, the system checks whether the seller is listed as a buyer for the individual parts. If so, i.e., if the seller of the product is also a buyer of the parts, then the process proceeds with the products/parts 5 listed in the Bill of Material field 1127 in the same manner as described above in connection with Product #1.

By way of example, when record 1131 is pulled from Relationship Table 1120 of Figure 3, the system checks the value of Bill of Material field 1127. Because 10 Bill of Material field 1127 lists two different products, the system no longer checks to see if Retailer A buys Product #1 from another member. Rather, the system checks Product field 1121 of Relationship Table 1127 for records indicating that Retailer A buys the products 15 contained in the Bill of Material field 1127, namely Part #2 and Part #3, from other members. For example, the system will pull record 1132 and record the sale of Part #2 from Manufacturer D to Retailer A as a transaction. Moreover, when the system pulls record 1133 20 showing that Manufacturer E sells Part #3 to Retailer A, the system will check to see if Manufacturer E buys Part #3 from another member. In response, the system will pull record 1134 showing that Manufacturer F sells Part #3 to Manufacturer E. Alternatively, rather than

storing the Bill of Material field in the Relationship Table, the field may be added to Product Table 140, so that the system checks the Product Table for parts information.

5 Accordingly, an order for a single product may generate multiple distribution streams of parts. Indeed, some of the parts may come from the same company that requested the product. For instance, this may occur when a manufacturer sells a complete product but only makes 10 some of the parts. In such a case, the manufacturer may list the parts that it provides in the database for internal accounting purposes.

Another advantage is that companies can sell more products and services than they would normally have 15 access to or in inventory because they can make pre-arranged transactions that are automatically implemented without their intervention. This allows the members to seamlessly offer via the Internet, in-store, mail order or through any other barter or sale transaction a wide 20 range of products and services. Because products can be shipped directly from one level of a chain of distribution to non-contiguous levels, the system also permits a consumer to order product from a reseller even if the reseller does not have the product on hand. The

system also allows the order to be seamlessly passed on to other resellers who can fulfill the product orders either directly or indirectly back through the reseller.

Another advantage of the invention is the 5 potential savings in shipping costs. For example, if a product is sold unchanged through three entities before going from the manufacturer to an end user, then rather than shipping that unit four different times the manufacturer may simply ship the unit directly to the end 10 user. One method of implementing this alternative would be to place a code in Ship To field 125 in Relationship Table 120 that indicates that the value contained in Ship To field 155 of Transaction Table 150 should be passed up the chain of transactions. This is not only advantageous 15 to resellers, who do not need to participate in the physical distribution of the product and are thus freed of the expense of receiving and making shipments, but it is also advantageous to the customer because shipments will often be quicker and less costly.

20 Preferably, the system does not provide members with access to transactions in which the member is not a direct buyer or seller. Often times, a broker will not want a manufacturer to know the identity of the broker's customers lest the manufacturer sell around the broker.

Accordingly, although Broker B will be notified of its transactions with Retailer A and Distributor C, Broker B will not be notified of the transactions which are upstream or downstream of those transactions. In other 5 words, transactions that do not directly involve a member are transparent to that member even if that member is somewhere in the chain of distribution of the product. This transparency has the added advantage of allowing consumers to buy products on-line and remain anonymous to 10 every entity in the chain of distribution other than the retailer operating the web site. Orders can be passed from the bottom of the chain of distribution, through the middle and to the top, both automatically and substantially anonymously.

15 This transparency can extend to the personalized information provided by the customer. It is not necessary to allow all of the members of the chain of distribution to have access to the personalized information. Rather, there are instances in which only 20 those entities which require the information in order to manufacture the product should have access to the personalized information. Accordingly, in another embodiment of the invention, the agreements table may be modified to include fields specifying whether a member

has full, partial or no access to the personalized information such as the image contained in personalization field 2152 of Figure 4. If the member has only partial access, then the member can see either 5 portions of the image or, alternatively, the entire image at low resolutions. The low-resolution images are intended to allow the member to see the image but still prevent the member from using the image to make a product (due to the low quality of the image).

10 A further advantage of the invention is that the same product information can be used by different parties. Because product information is centrally stored in a single table, resellers are saved the expense of retying the information provided by manufacturers. By 15 way of example, it is common for manufacturers to sell products to distributors through brokers. The distributors, in turn, sell the product to retailers who then sell the product to the public. Each one of the entities in this chain may have a web site which lists 20 the products they have available. If the entities choose, they may simply use the picture and description of the product stored in the products table rather than coming up with their own pictures and descriptions of the products.

The invention has numerous other advantages and alternatives. First, it allows resellers to sell products to and from each other. Second, the products contained in the system may be either controlled or not controlled by the database administrator. In other words, members are free to modify their own product information rather than requiring the human-intervention of the entity controlling the administrative server.. Third, it is not limited to "complete" channels of distribution. In other words, the system does not have to participate in every step of the channel of distribution for a particular product in order to provide a benefit to the members. Instead, it may implement only one or more portions of a channel of trade and, thus, complement prior art product ordering procedures. For example, the process does necessarily not start with the general public. It could start with any member ordering a product from any other member. Fourth, the system is not limited to products, but can also be used to offer and procure services such as labor services utilizing contractors, subcontractors and sub-subcontractors. Fifth, the system may be distributed or operate in parallel with other similar systems, such that it has one or more database servers, one or more database

administrators, and one or more web servers. Sixth, by breaking a chain of distribution into discrete relationships, the system can handle extremely complex webs of relationships.

5 It is also not necessary for the administrative server 70 to host the reseller's individual web sites. For example, as shown in Figure 1, resellers may host their own web sites on web servers 71-72, and send the product orders to administration server 70 via Internet
10 80.

Although the invention can be implemented using any known database system and language, yet another embodiment of the invention is set forth in Appendix A (incorporated herein by reference). The following fields
15 of the database illustrated in that Appendix are similar to the fields shown in Figure 2 above:

Figure 2	Appendix A
Member Table.Name 111	Member table, user_id field
Relationship Table.Product 121	Manufacturer Accepted Part and/or Manufacturer Accepted Products Reference tables, part_id field
Relationship Table.Seller 122	Manufacturer Accepted Part and/or Manufacturer Accepted Products Reference tables, src_id field
Relationship Table.Buyer 123	Manufacturer Accepted Part and/or Manufacturer Accepted Products Reference tables, mfr_id field
Relationship Table.Price 124	Manufacturer Accepted Part and/or Manufacturer Accepted Products Reference tables, src_price field
Product Table.Name 141	Part table, part_id field
Product Table.Picture 142	Part table, img_url field
Product Table.Description 143	Part table, brief_descr field
Transaction Table.Agreement ID	Order Header table, mfg_id and

151	ord_id fields
Transaction Table.Quantity 152	Order Line Item table, ord_qty fields
Transaction Table.Total Price 153	Calculated multiplication of Order Line Item Table, ord_qty and unit_price fields
Transaction Table.Ship To 155	Order Header Table, fields beginning "Sold_To"
Transaction Table.Personalization 2152	Filename of image is stored in Image Table in img_src field. The design_id field of the Order Line Item table points to the appropriate record of the Image table.

In operation, the modules set forth in the Appendix operate as follows: if Company A sells Product #10 to Company B who sells Product #10 to the general public, 5 then the "sp_pipeline_mfr_add" module is utilized twice to add Company A and then Company B to the database; the "sp_pipeline_mfr_product_add" module is then utilized to add Product #10 to the list of products which Company A sells on the system; in order to represent the fact that 10 Company A has agreed to sell products to Company B, an "organization" is created by utilizing the "sp_pipeline_org_add" module (the organization potentially having the identifier "Company A to B org"); the "sp_pipeline_org_product_add" module is then utilized 15 to identify the products that are sold within that organization, the price and other terms (e.g. the module would be utilized to identify Product #10 and the compensation agreed to be paid by Company B to Company A

for the product); another organization is created to represent Company B's sale of Product #10 to the public by again utilizing the "sp_pipeline_mfr_product_add", "sp_pipeline_org_add" and "sp_pipeline_org_product_add" 5 modules; and when a member of the public does ultimately order Product #10 from Company B and Company B approves the order, the system utilizes the recursive algorithms of the "BOrder.cls" object to find organizations implicated by the order and pass the order information 10 from one organization to the next. The "BProd.cls" object is utilized to provide product and line information for the order such as shipping info and details about the product being ordered. The "BOrg.cls" object is utilized to notify the companies about the 15 transactions. Preferably, credit checks are performed each time an order is made from one member to another.

Unless stated to the contrary, use of the words such as "including," "containing," "comprising" and the like, means "including without limitation" and shall not 20 be construed to limit any general statement that it follows to the specific or similar items or matters immediately following it.

Most of the foregoing alternative embodiments are not mutually exclusive, but may be implemented in

various combinations to achieve unique advantages. As these and other variations and combinations of the features discussed above can be utilized without departing from the invention as defined by the claims,
5 the foregoing description of the embodiments should be taken by way of illustration rather than by way of limitation of the invention as defined by the claims.

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

✓. A computer-implemented method of retrieving
product distribution information comprising:

(a) storing first relationship information and
5 second relationship information, said
relationship information identifying a
buyer, a seller and a product to be
provided from said seller to said buyer,
(b) said first relationship information
10 identifying a first entity as said buyer,
a second entity as said seller, and a
first product as said product,
(c) said second relationship information
identifying said second entity as said
buyer, a third entity as said seller, and
15 said first product as said product,
(d) retrieving said first relationship
information,
(e) retrieving said second relationship
20 information based on the identity of said
seller and the identity of said product
contained in said first relationship
information.

8. The method of claim 7 wherein said class is the general public.

9. The method of claim 7 wherein said step of retrieving said first relationship information comprises 5 displaying to said first entity at least two products associated with those relationships identifying said first entity as said buyer, and determining said first relationship information based upon the product selected by an entity of said class.

10. The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of storing a description of said product.

11. The method of claim 10 wherein said description comprises an image, a textual description, or an image and a textual description.

15. 12. The method of claim 1 further comprising the steps of:

(a) said first entity requesting said first product from said second entity and storing said request,

20 (b) storing a request for said first product by said second entity to said third entity based on the second relationship information retrieved

50
during said step of retrieving said
second relationship information.

13. The method of claim 12 further comprising
notifying said third entity of said request.

5 14. The method of claim 12 wherein said
requests includes the quantity of said product.

15. The method of claim 12 wherein said
requests include the shipping destination or destinations
of said product.

10 16. The method of claim 1 wherein said step of
retrieving said second relationship information comprises
searching for relationships wherein the buyer of the
relationship identifies the seller of said first
relationship and the product of the relationship
15 identifies the product of said first relationship.

17. The method of claim 1 further comprising
the steps of storing additional relationships associated
with said product; repeating said step of retrieving said
second relationship by recursively assuming that some of
20 the values of said first relationship are equal to the
values of said second relationship.

18. The method of claim 17 wherein said step
of repeating terminates when there is no relationship

identifying the seller of said second relationship as a buyer of the same product in another relationship.

19. A computer-implemented method of providing information about a product including typesetting 5 comprising:

- (a) storing data representing a product available from a first member to a class of customers, said product including typesetting;
- 10 (b) storing data representing an agreement by a second member to provide said product to said first member;
- 15 (c) receiving a customer request from a customer of said class of customers for said product, said customer request including typesetting information describing said typesetting;
- 20 (d) storing said customer request;
- (e) retrieving said agreement based on the identity of said product and said first member associated with said customer request;

5 (f) generating a second request that said second member provide said product to said first member, said second request identifying said typesetting information;

(g) transmitting said second request to said second member.

20. The method of claim 19 wherein said class of customers comprises a single entity.

10 21. The method of claim 19 further comprising storing data representing an agreement by a third member to provide said product to said second member; retrieving said agreement by said third member based on the identity of said product and the identity of said second member.

15 22. The method of claim 21 wherein said typesetting information comprises an image.

23. The method of claim 22 further comprising the steps of receiving a plurality of requests from a plurality of customers of said class of customers, and 20 wherein the image associated with one customer request is different from the image associated with another customer request.

24. The method of claim 23 wherein said step of storing said customer requests from said customers

comprises storing said different images in the same file format.

25. The method of claim 24 further comprising the step of said second member retrieving said image.

5 26. The method of claim 25 further comprising the step of converting said image from said file format to a different file format before said step of said second member retrieving said image.

10 27. The method of claim 23 wherein said step of storing said customer requests from said customers comprises storing said different images in different file formats.

15 28. The method of claim 27 wherein said different file formats correspond with file formats used by said members.

29. The method of claim 19 further comprising the step of manufacturing said product.

20 30. The method of claim 19 wherein said product is a stamp and said typesetting relates to the impression on said stamp.

31. The method of claim 19 wherein said requests identify said typesetting information by reference to information stored in a database.

32. The method of claim 19 wherein said step of receiving said customer request comprises receiving said customer request over a global telecommunications network.

5 33. A computer-implemented method of retrieving information comprising:

(a) storing first relationship information and second relationship information, said relationship information identifying a buyer, a seller and a first product provided from said seller to said buyer,

10 (b) said first relationship information identifying a first entity as said buyer, a second entity as said seller, and a first product as said product,

15 (c) said second relationship information identifying said second entity as said buyer, a third entity as said seller, and a second product as said product,

20 (d) retrieving said first relationship information,

(e) retrieving said second relationship information based on the identity of said seller identified in said first relationship information.

5 34. A system for storing information about buyers and sellers of products comprising:

10 (a) a database containing a plurality of relationship records, each said relationship record identifying a buyer, a seller and a product provided from said seller to said buyer,

15 (b) a processor for retrieving a second relationship record based on a first relationship record, whereby said buyer entity identified in said second relationship record is the same entity as the seller identified in said second relationship record, and whereby said product identified in said second relationship record is related to said product identified in said first relationship record.

20

35. The system of claim 34 wherein database is stored at a central location.

36. The system of claim 35 wherein said database is stored in a single server.

37. A system for storing information about relationships between buyers and sellers, said system
5 maintained by an administrator, said system comprising:

10

(a) data representing an agreement by a middle entity to provide a product to a bottom entity in exchange for compensation and an agreement by a top entity to provide a related product to said middle entity in exchange for compensation, none of said entities being said administrator, and

15

(b) a processor for utilizing said data to process a request for said product from said bottom entity to said middle entity such that said request generates a request for said product from said middle entity to said top entity.

20

38. The system of claim 37 wherein said data further comprises another agreement by another entity to provide said product to said top entity.

39. A computer-implemented method of retrieving information relating to a request for personalized products, said method comprising:

5 (a) storing an agreement by a second entity to provide a product to a first entity,

10 (b) storing an agreement by a third entity to provide said product to said second entity,

15 (c) said first entity requesting said product from said second entity such that the request includes modifying the product in accordance with personalization information provided by said first entity, said personalization information being particular to said first entity, and

20 (d) generating a request for said product from said second entity to third entity based on said stored agreements, said request from said second entity to said third entity including said personalization information.

40. The method of claim 39 wherein said personalization information comprises an image.

41. A computer-implemented method of selling products over the world-wide web, said method comprising:

- 5 (a) providing a database centrally storing agreements between a plurality of members to sell a product;
- 10 (b) sending a web page from a first member to a customer, said web page identifying a product that is the subject of one of said agreements of said database;
- 15 (c) receiving a request for said product from said customer, said request including an image provided by said customer;
- 20 (d) generating a first purchase order from said first member to a second member based on a second agreement stored in said database, said purchase order including said image, and

(e) generating a second purchase order from said second member to a third member based on a third agreement stored in said database, said purchase order including said image.

42. The method of claim 41 further comprising the step of said members storing said agreements by sending information relating to such agreement to said database.

10 43. The method of claim 41 wherein said product comprises a stamp having an impression representing said image.

44. The method of claim 41 wherein said product comprises a printed item or sign containing said image.

ABSTRACT

A computer-implemented method and system is provided which displays lists of products including personalization information and further allows the 5 locking of aspects of personalization information..

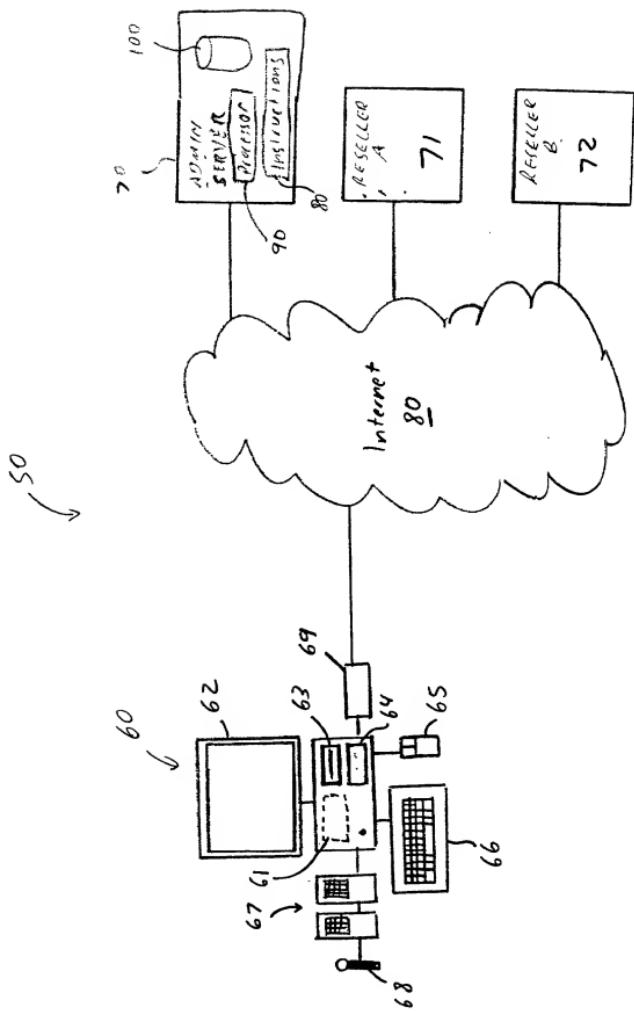


Figure 1

Reseller Database 100

Member Table

110

	Name 111	Address 112
115→	Retailer A	1 Main Street
116→	Broker B	2 Second Street
117→	Distributor C	3 Third Street
118→	Manufacturer D	4 Fourth Street

FIGURE 2

Relationship Table

120

	Product 121	Seller 122	Buyer 123	Price 124	Ship To 125	ID 126
131→	Product #1	Retailer A	Public	\$12	Prompt	1
132→	Product #1	Broker B	Retailer A	\$10	Retailer A	12
133→	Product #1	Distributor C	Broker B	\$8	Retailer A	23
134→	Product #1	Manufacturer D	Distributor C	\$6	Distributor C	34
135→	Product #2	Retailer A	Public	\$20	Prompt	2

Product Table

140

	Name 141	Picture 142	Description 143
145→	Product #1		RM-2 COMPACT STAMP Impression size: .5" x 2"
146→	Product #2		INSPECTOR STAMPS Impression sizes: .5" & .75" diameter

Transaction

Table

150

	Agreement ID 151	Quantity 152	Total Price 153	Ship To 155
157→	1	2	24	...
158→	12	2	20	Retailer A

Relationship Table
1120

Product 1121	Seller 1122	Buyer 1123	Bill of Materials 1127	Price \$12	ShipTo 1125	ID 1131
Product #1	Retailer A	Public	Part #2, Part #3	\$12	Prompt	
Part #2	Manufacturer D	Retailer A		\$6	Retailer A	1132
Part #3	Manufacturer E	Retailer A		\$4	Retailer A	1133
Part #3	Manufacturer F	Manufacturer E		\$2	Manufacturer E	1134

FIGURE 3

Relationship Table
2120

Product 2131	Seller #1	Buyer Public	Personalization 2128	Price \$12	Ship To Prompt	ID 2131
-----------------	--------------	-----------------	-------------------------	---------------	-------------------	------------

Transaction Table 2150

Agreement ID	Quantity	Total Price	Personalization	Ship To
2131	1	24		M&R Marking Systems 100 Springfield Avenue Piscataway, New Jersey, 08855-6969

FIGURE 4

Microsoft Internet Explorer

File Edit View Favorites Tools Help

Back Forward Stop Refresh Favorites History

INSPECTOR STAMPS

Impression size:
.5" x 2"
.5" & .75" diameter



\$12

Order ↑ 401



\$20

Order ↑ 402

Done Internet

Figure 5

W

501

502

503

504

505

506

507

508

509

510

511

512

513

514

515

516

517

518

519

520

521

522

523

524

525

526

527

528

529

530

531

532

533

534

535

536

537

538

539

540

541

542

543

544

545

546

547

548

549

550

551

552

553

554

555

556

557

558

559

560

561

562

563

564

565

566

567

568

569

570

571

572

573

574

575

576

577

578

579

580

581

582

583

584

585

586

587

588

589

590

591

592

593

594

595

596

597

598

599

600

601

602

603

604

605

606

607

608

609

610

611

612

613

614

615

616

617

618

619

620

621

622

623

624

625

626

627

628

629

630

631

632

633

634

635

636

637

638

639

640

641

642

643

644

645

646

647

648

649

650

651

652

653

654

655

656

657

658

659

660

661

662

663

664

665

666

667

668

669

670

671

672

673

674

675

676

677

678

679

680

681

682

683

684

685

686

687

688

689

690

691

692

693

694

695

696

697

698

699

700

701

702

703

704

705

706

707

708

709

710

711

712

713

714

715

716

717

718

719

720

721

722

723

724

725

726

727

728

729

730

731

732

733

734

735

736

737

738

739

740

741

742

743

744

745

746

747

748

749

750

751

752

753

754

755

756

757

758

759

760

761

762

763

764

765

766

767

768

769

770

771

772

773

774

775

776

777

778

779

780

781

782

783

784

785

786

787

788

789

790

791

792

793

794

795

796

797

798

799

800

801

802

803

804

805

806

807

808

809

810

811

812

813

814

815

816

817

818

819

820

821

822

823

824

825

826

827

828

829

830

831

832

833

834

835

836

837

838

839

840

841

842

843

844

845

846

847

848

849

850

851

852

853

854

855

856

857

858

859

860

861

862

863

864

865

866

867

868

869

870

871

872

873

874

875

876

877

878

879

880

881

882

883

884

885

886

887

888

889

890

891

892

893

894

895

896

897

898

899

900

901

902

903

904

905

906

907

908

909

910

911

912

913

914

915

916

917

918

919

920

921

922

923

924

925

926

927

928

929

930

931

932

933

934

935

936

937

938

939

940

941

942

943

944

945

946

947

948

949

950

951

952

953

954

955

956

957

958

959

960

961

962

963

964

965

966

967

968

969

970

971

972

973

974

975

976

977

978

979

980

981

982

983

984

985

986

987

988

989

990

991

992

993

994

995

996

997

998

999

1000

1001

1002

1003

1004

1005

1006

1007

1008

1009

1010

1011

1012

1013

1014

1015

1016

1017

1018

1019

1020

1021

1022

1023

1024

1025

1026

1027

1028

1029

1030

1031

1032

1033

1034

1035

1036

1037

1038

1039

1040

1041

1042

1043

1044

1045

1046

1047

1048

1049

1050

1051

1052

1053

1054

1055

1056

1057

1058

1059

1060

1061

1062

1063

1064

1065

1066

1067

1068

1069

1070

1071

1072

1073

1074

1075

1076

1077

1078

1079

1080

1081

1082

1083

1084

1085

1086

1087

1088

1089

1090

1091

1092

1093

1094

1095

1096

1097

1098

1099

1100

1101

1102

1103

1104

1105

1106

1107

1108

1109

1110

1111

1112

1113

1114

1115

1116

1117

1118

1119

1120

1121

1122

1123

1124

1125

1126

1127

1128

1129

1130

1131

1132

1133

1134

1135

1136

1137

1138

1139

1140

1141

1142

1143

1144

1145

1146

1147

1148

1149

1150

1151

1152

1153

1154

1155

1156

1157

1158

1159

1160

1161

1162

1163

1164

1165

1166

1167

1168

1169

1170

1171

1172

1173

1174

1175

1176

1177

1178

1179

1180

1181

1182

1183

1184

1185

1186

1187

1188

1189

1190

1191

1192

1193

1194

1195

1196

1197

1198

1199

1200

1201

1202

1203

1204

1205

1206

1207

1208

1209

1210

1211

1212

1213

1214

1215

1216

1217

1218

1219

1220

1221

1222

1223

1224

1225

1226

1227

1228

1229

1230

1231

1232

1233

1234

1235

1236

1237

1238

1239

1240

1241

1242

1243

1244

1245

1246

1247

1248

1249

1250

1251

1252

1253

1254

1255

1256

1257

1258

1259

1260

1261

1262

1263

1264

1265

1266

1267

1268

1269

1270

1271

1272

1273

1274

1275

1276

1277

1278

1279

1280

1281

1282

1283

1284

1285

1286

1287

1288

1289

1290

1291

1292

1293

1294

1295

1296

1297

1298

1299

1300

1301

1302

1303

1304

1305

1306

1307

1308

1309

1310

1311

1312

1313

1314

1315

1316

1317

1318

1319

1320

1321

1322

1323

1324

1325

1326

1327

1328

1329

1330

1331

1332

1333

1334

1335

1336

1337

1338

1339

1340

1341

1342

1343

1344

1345

1346

1347

1348

1349

1350

1351

1352

1353

1354

1355

1356

1357

1358

1359

1360

1361

1362

1363

1364

1365

1366

1367

1368

1369

1370

1371

1372

1373

1374

1375

1376

1377

1378

1379

1380

1381

1382

1383

1384

1385

1386

1387

1388

1389

1390

1391

1392

1393

1394

1395

1396

1397

1398

1399

1400

1401

1402

1403

1404

1405

1406

1407

1408

1409

1410

1411

1412

1413

1414

1415

1416

1417

1418

1419

1420

1421

1422

1423

1424

1425

1426

1427

1428

1429

1430

1431

1432

1433

1434

1435

1436

1437

1438

1439

1440

1441

1442

1443

1444

1445

1446

1447

1448

1449

1450

1451

1452

1453

1454

1455

1456

1457

1458

1459

1460

1461

1462

1463

1464

1465

1466

1467

1468

1469

1470

1471

1472

1473

1474

1475

1476

1477

1478

1479

1480

1481

1482

1483

1484

1485

1486

1487

1488

1489

1490

1491

1492

1493

1494

1495

1496

1497

1498

1499

1500

1501

1502

1503

1504

1505

1506

1507

1508

1509

1510

1511

1512

1513

1514

1515

1516

1517

1518

1519

1520

1521

1522

1523

1524

1525

1526

1527

1528

1529

1530

1531

1532

1533

1534

1535

1536

1537

1538

1539

1540

1541

1542

1543

1544

1545

1546

1547

1548

1549

1550

1551

1552

1553

1554

1555

1556

1557

1558

1559

1560

1561

1562

1563

1564

1565

1566

1567

1568

1569

1570

1571

1572

1573

1574

1575

1576

1577

1578

1579

1580

1581

1582

1583

1584

1585

1586

1587

1588

1589

1590

1591

1592

1593

1594

1595

1596

1597

1598

1599

1600

1601

1602

1603

1604

1605

1606

1607

1608

1609

1610

1611

1612

1613

1614

1615

1616

1617

1618

1619

1620

1621

1622

1623

1624

1625

1626

1627

1628

1629

1630

1631

1632

1633

1634

1635

1636

1637

1638

1639

1640

1641

1642

1643

1644

1645

1646

1647

1648

1649

1650

1651

1652

1653

1654

1655

1656

1657

1658

1659

1660

1661

1662

1663

1664

1665

1666

1667

1668

1669

1670

1671

1672

1673

1674

1675

1676

1677

1678

1679

1680

1681

1682

1683

1684

1685

1686

1687

1688

1689

1690

1691

1692

1693

1694

1695

1696

1697

1698

1699

1700

1701

1702

1703

1704

1705

1706

1707

1708

1709

1710

1711

1712

1713

1714

1715

1716

1717

1718

1719

1720

1721

1722

1723

1724

1725

1726

1727

1728

1729

1730

1731

1732

1733

1734

1735

1736

1737

1738

1739

1740

1741

1742

1743

1744

1745

1746

1747

1748

1749

1750

1751

1752

1753

1754

1755

1756

1757

1758

1759

1760

1761

1762

1763

1764

1765

1766

1767

1768

1769

1770

1771

1772

1773

1774

1775

1776

1777

1778

1779

1780

1781

1782

1783

1784

1785

1786

1787

1788

1789

1790

1791

1792

1793

1794

1795

1796

1797

1798

1799

1800

1801

1802

1803

1804

1805

1806

1807

1808

1809

1810

1811

1812

1813

1814

1815

1816

1817

1818

1819

1820

1821

1822

1823

1824

1825

1826

1827

1828

1829

1830

1831

1832

1833

1834

1835

1836

1837

1838

1839

1840

1841

1842

1843

1844

1845

1846

1847

1848

1849

1850

1851

1852

1853

1854

1855

1856

1857

1858

1859

1860

1861

1862

1863

1864

1865

1866

1867

1868

1869

1870

1871

1872

1873

1874

1875

1876

1877

1878

1879

1880

1881

1882

1883

1884

1885

1886

1887

1888

1889

1890

1891

1892

1893

1894

1895

1896

1897

1898

1899

1900

1901

1902

1903

1904

1905

1906

1907

1908

1909

1910

1911

1912

1913

1914

1915

1916

1917

1918

1919

1920

1921

1922

1923

1924

1925

File Edit View Favorites Tools Help Back Stop Search Favorites History Home Address: https://www.westerncarpet.com/secure/OrderSubmitted.asp URL: http://www.westerncarpet.com/secure/OrderSubmitted.asp

Your order contains:

Description	Price	Quantity	Part #
 Part # : 200G-BLACK IDEAL 200 SELF-INKING STAMP WITH GREY CASE, BLACK INK	\$16.57	1	\$16.57
 Part # : 200G-BLACK IDEAL 200 SELF-INKING STAMP WITH GREY CASE, BLACK INK	\$16.57	1	\$16.57
 Part # : 300G-BLACK IDEAL 300 SELF-INKING STAMP WITH GREY CASE, BLACK INK	\$20.72	1	\$20.72
 Part # : 450G-BLACK METAL SELF-INKING DIE PLATE DATER WITH BLACK PAD	\$61.42	1	\$61.42

For Deposit Only
Your Bank & Trust Company
JAN 19 2009
Sims, J
123-45678-90

For Deposit Only
Your Bank & Trust Company
JAN 19 2009
Sims, J
123-45678-90

THE DU CHEEDEE
"THE BANK PAD"

Your Bank & Trust
Philadelphia, PA
JAN 19 2009
Sims, J
East Phila. Office
Tele: 123-4567

1

Figure 7

1
S11

Figure 8 shows a screenshot of a Microsoft Internet Explorer browser window displaying the "DLC Demo - VIEW ORDER STATUS" page. The page lists four items in a table format, each with a status indicator and a small icon. Handwritten numbers and arrows are overlaid on the page to track the status of each item.

Part #	Description	Quantity	Unit Price	Notes
2005-BLACK	IDEAL 200 SELF-INKING STAMP WITH GREY CASE, BLACK INK	1	\$16.57	Mike Basketball Coach
2005-BLACK	IDEAL 200 SELF-INKING STAMP WITH GREY CASE, BLACK INK	1	\$16.57	Mike Racing League
2005-BLACK	IDEAL 200 SELF-INKING STAMP WITH GREY CASE, BLACK INK	1	\$16.57	Mike Dance Team
2005-BLACK	IDEAL 200 SELF-INKING STAMP WITH GREY CASE, BLACK INK	1	\$16.57	Mike Basketball coach

Handwritten annotations:

- S17** is written next to the first row, with an arrow pointing to the "Mike Basketball Coach" note.
- S18** is written next to the second row, with an arrow pointing to the "Mike Racing League" note.
- S19** is written next to the third row, with an arrow pointing to the "Mike Dance Team" note.
- S20** is written next to the fourth row, with an arrow pointing to the "Mike Basketball coach" note.
- S16** is written next to the fourth row, with an arrow pointing to the "Mike Basketball coach" note.
- S15** is written below the fourth row, with an arrow pointing to the "Mike Basketball coach" note.
- A large handwritten letter **P** is written above the fourth row.

Figure 8

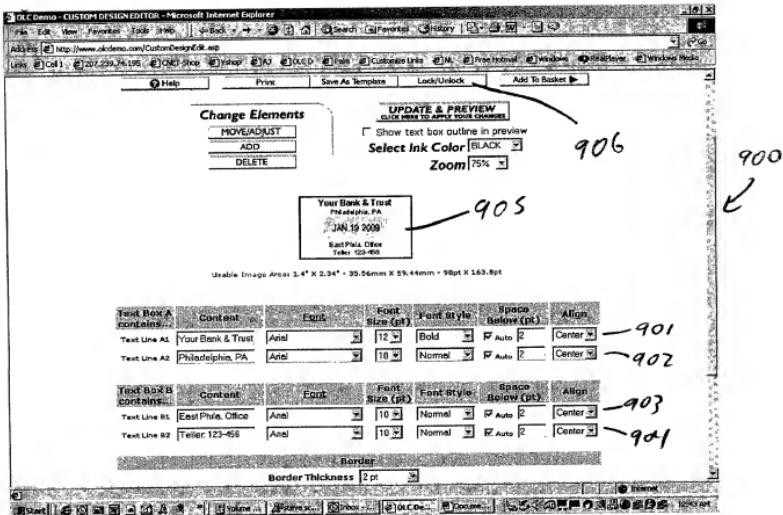


Figure 9

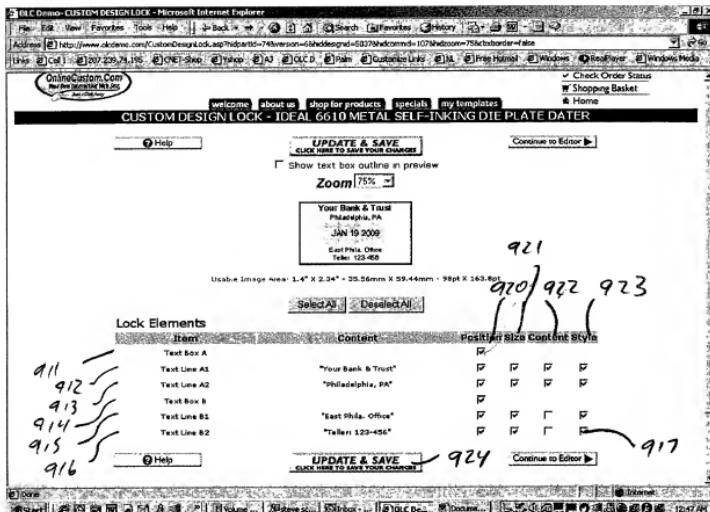


Figure 10

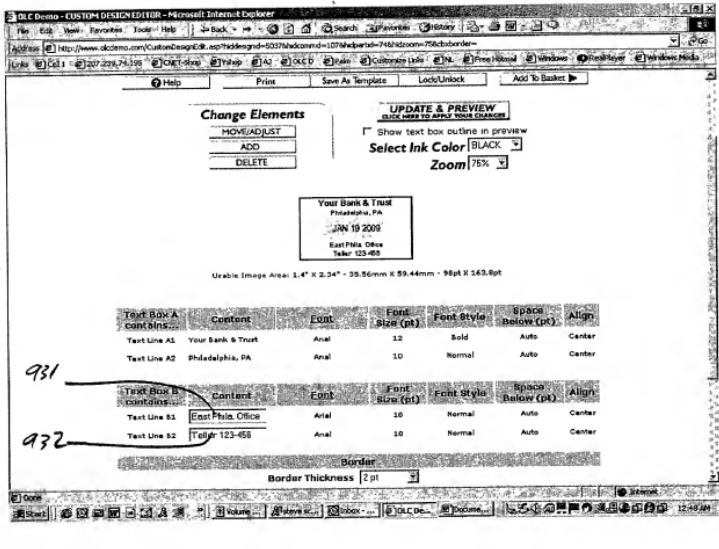


Fig. 11

File Edit View Favorites Task List Help Back Stop Search Favorites Today

Address http://www.cdcnet.com/CustomDesign/CR.asp

Use [] Call [] 201.251.74.15 [] Stop [] Back [] Colours Help [] M [] Find Home [] Windows [] Read/Reply [] Windows Help

Change Elements

MOVE/ADJUST
ADD
DELETE

UPDATE & PREVIEW
SHOW TEXT BOX OUTLINE IN PREVIEW

Show text box outline in preview

Select Ink Color [BLACK]

Zoom [100%]

9412



Sarah
Cheerleading Director
Marlboro Mustangs

Usable Image Area: 1.56" X 3.06" - 39.42mm X 77.85mm - 109.3pt X 214.55pt

Text Box A contains:

Content	Font	Font Size (pt)	Font Style	Space Below (pt)	Align
Text Line A1: Sarah	Avail	16	Bold	Auto	Center
Text Line A2: Cheerleading Dire	Avail	16	Normal	Auto	Center
Text Line A3: Marlboro Mustang	Avail	16	Bold	Auto	Center

9412

Image **Content** **Scale**

Image 1 

100%

Done Start Task List View Favorites Help Windows Internet Explorer

Fig. 12

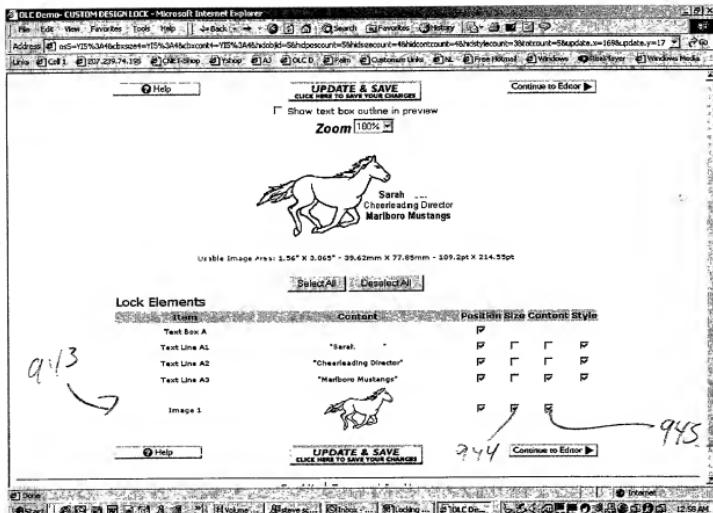


Figure 13

960

961

DLC Demo - CUSTOM DESIGN EDITOR - Microsoft Internet Explorer

File Edit View Favorites Tools Help

Address: <http://www.dlcdemo.com/CustomDesignEditor.aspx?DesignerID=5259&Designer=0&DesignerName=1000chandler>

Links: [Q1](#) [Q2](#) [Q3](#) [Q4](#) [Q5](#) [Q6](#) [Q7](#) [Q8](#) [Q9](#) [Q10](#) [Q11](#) [Q12](#) [Q13](#) [Q14](#) [Q15](#) [Q16](#) [Q17](#) [Q18](#) [Q19](#) [Q20](#) [Q21](#) [Q22](#) [Q23](#) [Q24](#) [Q25](#) [Q26](#) [Q27](#) [Q28](#) [Q29](#) [Q30](#) [Q31](#) [Q32](#) [Q33](#) [Q34](#) [Q35](#) [Q36](#) [Q37](#) [Q38](#) [Q39](#) [Q40](#) [Q41](#) [Q42](#) [Q43](#) [Q44](#) [Q45](#) [Q46](#) [Q47](#) [Q48](#) [Q49](#) [Q50](#) [Q51](#) [Q52](#) [Q53](#) [Q54](#) [Q55](#) [Q56](#) [Q57](#) [Q58](#) [Q59](#) [Q60](#) [Q61](#) [Q62](#) [Q63](#) [Q64](#) [Q65](#) [Q66](#) [Q67](#) [Q68](#) [Q69](#) [Q70](#) [Q71](#) [Q72](#) [Q73](#) [Q74](#) [Q75](#) [Q76](#) [Q77](#) [Q78](#) [Q79](#) [Q80](#) [Q81](#) [Q82](#) [Q83](#) [Q84](#) [Q85](#) [Q86](#) [Q87](#) [Q88](#) [Q89](#) [Q90](#) [Q91](#) [Q92](#) [Q93](#) [Q94](#) [Q95](#) [Q96](#) [Q97](#) [Q98](#) [Q99](#) [Q100](#) [Q101](#) [Q102](#) [Q103](#) [Q104](#) [Q105](#) [Q106](#) [Q107](#) [Q108](#) [Q109](#) [Q110](#) [Q111](#) [Q112](#) [Q113](#) [Q114](#) [Q115](#) [Q116](#) [Q117](#) [Q118](#) [Q119](#) [Q120](#) [Q121](#) [Q122](#) [Q123](#) [Q124](#) [Q125](#) [Q126](#) [Q127](#) [Q128](#) [Q129](#) [Q130](#) [Q131](#) [Q132](#) [Q133](#) [Q134](#) [Q135](#) [Q136](#) [Q137](#) [Q138](#) [Q139](#) [Q140](#) [Q141](#) [Q142](#) [Q143](#) [Q144](#) [Q145](#) [Q146](#) [Q147](#) [Q148](#) [Q149](#) [Q150](#) [Q151](#) [Q152](#) [Q153](#) [Q154](#) [Q155](#) [Q156](#) [Q157](#) [Q158](#) [Q159](#) [Q160](#) [Q161](#) [Q162](#) [Q163](#) [Q164](#) [Q165](#) [Q166](#) [Q167](#) [Q168](#) [Q169](#) [Q170](#) [Q171](#) [Q172](#) [Q173](#) [Q174](#) [Q175](#) [Q176](#) [Q177](#) [Q178](#) [Q179](#) [Q180](#) [Q181](#) [Q182](#) [Q183](#) [Q184](#) [Q185](#) [Q186](#) [Q187](#) [Q188](#) [Q189](#) [Q190](#) [Q191](#) [Q192](#) [Q193](#) [Q194](#) [Q195](#) [Q196](#) [Q197](#) [Q198](#) [Q199](#) [Q200](#) [Q201](#) [Q202](#) [Q203](#) [Q204](#) [Q205](#) [Q206](#) [Q207](#) [Q208](#) [Q209](#) [Q210](#) [Q211](#) [Q212](#) [Q213](#) [Q214](#) [Q215](#) [Q216](#) [Q217](#) [Q218](#) [Q219](#) [Q220](#) [Q221](#) [Q222](#) [Q223](#) [Q224](#) [Q225](#) [Q226](#) [Q227](#) [Q228](#) [Q229](#) [Q230](#) [Q231](#) [Q232](#) [Q233](#) [Q234](#) [Q235](#) [Q236](#) [Q237](#) [Q238](#) [Q239](#) [Q240](#) [Q241](#) [Q242](#) [Q243](#) [Q244](#) [Q245](#) [Q246](#) [Q247](#) [Q248](#) [Q249](#) [Q250](#) [Q251](#) [Q252](#) [Q253](#) [Q254](#) [Q255](#) [Q256](#) [Q257](#) [Q258](#) [Q259](#) [Q260](#) [Q261](#) [Q262](#) [Q263](#) [Q264](#) [Q265](#) [Q266](#) [Q267](#) [Q268](#) [Q269](#) [Q270](#) [Q271](#) [Q272](#) [Q273](#) [Q274](#) [Q275](#) [Q276](#) [Q277](#) [Q278](#) [Q279](#) [Q280](#) [Q281](#) [Q282](#) [Q283](#) [Q284](#) [Q285](#) [Q286](#) [Q287](#) [Q288](#) [Q289](#) [Q290](#) [Q291](#) [Q292](#) [Q293](#) [Q294](#) [Q295](#) [Q296](#) [Q297](#) [Q298](#) [Q299](#) [Q300](#) [Q301](#) [Q302](#) [Q303](#) [Q304](#) [Q305](#) [Q306](#) [Q307](#) [Q308](#) [Q309](#) [Q310](#) [Q311](#) [Q312](#) [Q313](#) [Q314](#) [Q315](#) [Q316](#) [Q317](#) [Q318](#) [Q319](#) [Q320](#) [Q321](#) [Q322](#) [Q323](#) [Q324](#) [Q325](#) [Q326](#) [Q327](#) [Q328](#) [Q329](#) [Q330](#) [Q331](#) [Q332](#) [Q333](#) [Q334](#) [Q335](#) [Q336](#) [Q337](#) [Q338](#) [Q339](#) [Q340](#) [Q341](#) [Q342](#) [Q343](#) [Q344](#) [Q345](#) [Q346](#) [Q347](#) [Q348](#) [Q349](#) [Q350](#) [Q351](#) [Q352](#) [Q353](#) [Q354](#) [Q355](#) [Q356](#) [Q357](#) [Q358](#) [Q359](#) [Q360](#) [Q361](#) [Q362](#) [Q363](#) [Q364](#) [Q365](#) [Q366](#) [Q367](#) [Q368](#) [Q369](#) [Q370](#) [Q371](#) [Q372](#) [Q373](#) [Q374](#) [Q375](#) [Q376](#) [Q377](#) [Q378](#) [Q379](#) [Q380](#) [Q381](#) [Q382](#) [Q383](#) [Q384](#) [Q385](#) [Q386](#) [Q387](#) [Q388](#) [Q389](#) [Q390](#) [Q391](#) [Q392](#) [Q393](#) [Q394](#) [Q395](#) [Q396](#) [Q397](#) [Q398](#) [Q399](#) [Q400](#) [Q401](#) [Q402](#) [Q403](#) [Q404](#) [Q405](#) [Q406](#) [Q407](#) [Q408](#) [Q409](#) [Q410](#) [Q411](#) [Q412](#) [Q413](#) [Q414](#) [Q415](#) [Q416](#) [Q417](#) [Q418](#) [Q419](#) [Q420](#) [Q421](#) [Q422](#) [Q423](#) [Q424](#) [Q425](#) [Q426](#) [Q427](#) [Q428](#) [Q429](#) [Q430](#) [Q431](#) [Q432](#) [Q433](#) [Q434](#) [Q435](#) [Q436](#) [Q437](#) [Q438](#) [Q439](#) [Q440](#) [Q441](#) [Q442](#) [Q443](#) [Q444](#) [Q445](#) [Q446](#) [Q447](#) [Q448](#) [Q449](#) [Q450](#) [Q451](#) [Q452](#) [Q453](#) [Q454](#) [Q455](#) [Q456](#) [Q457](#) [Q458](#) [Q459](#) [Q460](#) [Q461](#) [Q462](#) [Q463](#) [Q464](#) [Q465](#) [Q466](#) [Q467](#) [Q468](#) [Q469](#) [Q470](#) [Q471](#) [Q472](#) [Q473](#) [Q474](#) [Q475](#) [Q476](#) [Q477](#) [Q478](#) [Q479](#) [Q480](#) [Q481](#) [Q482](#) [Q483](#) [Q484](#) [Q485](#) [Q486](#) [Q487](#) [Q488](#) [Q489](#) [Q490](#) [Q491](#) [Q492](#) [Q493](#) [Q494](#) [Q495](#) [Q496](#) [Q497](#) [Q498](#) [Q499](#) [Q500](#) [Q501](#) [Q502](#) [Q503](#) [Q504](#) [Q505](#) [Q506](#) [Q507](#) [Q508](#) [Q509](#) [Q510](#) [Q511](#) [Q512](#) [Q513](#) [Q514](#) [Q515](#) [Q516](#) [Q517](#) [Q518](#) [Q519](#) [Q520](#) [Q521](#) [Q522](#) [Q523](#) [Q524](#) [Q525](#) [Q526](#) [Q527](#) [Q528](#) [Q529](#) [Q530](#) [Q531](#) [Q532](#) [Q533](#) [Q534](#) [Q535](#) [Q536](#) [Q537](#) [Q538](#) [Q539](#) [Q540](#) [Q541](#) [Q542](#) [Q543](#) [Q544](#) [Q545](#) [Q546](#) [Q547](#) [Q548](#) [Q549](#) [Q550](#) [Q551](#) [Q552](#) [Q553](#) [Q554](#) [Q555](#) [Q556](#) [Q557](#) [Q558](#) [Q559](#) [Q560](#) [Q561](#) [Q562](#) [Q563](#) [Q564](#) [Q565](#) [Q566](#) [Q567](#) [Q568](#) [Q569](#) [Q570](#) [Q571](#) [Q572](#) [Q573](#) [Q574](#) [Q575](#) [Q576](#) [Q577](#) [Q578](#) [Q579](#) [Q580](#) [Q581](#) [Q582](#) [Q583](#) [Q584](#) [Q585](#) [Q586](#) [Q587](#) [Q588](#) [Q589](#) [Q590](#) [Q591](#) [Q592](#) [Q593](#) [Q594](#) [Q595](#) [Q596](#) [Q597](#) [Q598](#) [Q599](#) [Q600](#) [Q601](#) [Q602](#) [Q603](#) [Q604](#) [Q605](#) [Q606](#) [Q607](#) [Q608](#) [Q609](#) [Q610](#) [Q611](#) [Q612](#) [Q613](#) [Q614](#) [Q615](#) [Q616](#) [Q617](#) [Q618](#) [Q619](#) [Q620](#) [Q621](#) [Q622](#) [Q623](#) [Q624](#) [Q625](#) [Q626](#) [Q627](#) [Q628](#) [Q629](#) [Q630](#) [Q631](#) [Q632](#) [Q633](#) [Q634](#) [Q635](#) [Q636](#) [Q637](#) [Q638](#) [Q639](#) [Q640](#) [Q641](#) [Q642](#) [Q643](#) [Q644](#) [Q645](#) [Q646](#) [Q647](#) [Q648](#) [Q649](#) [Q650](#) [Q651](#) [Q652](#) [Q653](#) [Q654](#) [Q655](#) [Q656](#) [Q657](#) [Q658](#) [Q659](#) [Q660](#) [Q661](#) [Q662](#) [Q663](#) [Q664](#) [Q665](#) [Q666](#) [Q667](#) [Q668](#) [Q669](#) [Q670](#) [Q671](#) [Q672](#) [Q673](#) [Q674](#) [Q675](#) [Q676](#) [Q677](#) [Q678](#) [Q679](#) [Q680](#) [Q681](#) [Q682](#) [Q683](#) [Q684](#) [Q685](#) [Q686](#) [Q687](#) [Q688](#) [Q689](#) [Q690](#) [Q691](#) [Q692](#) [Q693](#) [Q694](#) [Q695](#) [Q696](#) [Q697](#) [Q698](#) [Q699](#) [Q700](#) [Q701](#) [Q702](#) [Q703](#) [Q704](#) [Q705](#) [Q706](#) [Q707](#) [Q708](#) [Q709](#) [Q710](#) [Q711](#) [Q712](#) [Q713](#) [Q714](#) [Q715](#) [Q716](#) [Q717](#) [Q718](#) [Q719](#) [Q720](#) [Q721](#) [Q722](#) [Q723](#) [Q724](#) [Q725](#) [Q726](#) [Q727](#) [Q728](#) [Q729](#) [Q730](#) [Q731](#) [Q732](#) [Q733](#) [Q734](#) [Q735](#) [Q736](#) [Q737](#) [Q738](#) [Q739](#) [Q740](#) [Q741](#) [Q742](#) [Q743](#) [Q744](#) [Q745](#) [Q746](#) [Q747](#) [Q748](#) [Q749](#) [Q750](#) [Q751](#) [Q752](#) [Q753](#) [Q754](#) [Q755](#) [Q756](#) [Q757](#) [Q758](#) [Q759](#) [Q760](#) [Q761](#) [Q762](#) [Q763](#) [Q764](#) [Q765](#) [Q766](#) [Q767](#) [Q768](#) [Q769](#) [Q770](#) [Q771](#) [Q772](#) [Q773](#) [Q774](#) [Q775](#) [Q776](#) [Q777](#) [Q778](#) [Q779](#) [Q780](#) [Q781](#) [Q782](#) [Q783](#) [Q784](#) [Q785](#) [Q786](#) [Q787](#) [Q788](#) [Q789](#) [Q790](#) [Q791](#) [Q792](#) [Q793](#) [Q794](#) [Q795](#) [Q796](#) [Q797](#) [Q798](#) [Q799](#) [Q800](#) [Q801](#) [Q802](#) [Q803](#) [Q804](#) [Q805](#) [Q806](#) [Q807](#) [Q808](#) [Q809](#) [Q810](#) [Q811](#) [Q812](#) [Q813](#) [Q814](#) [Q815](#) [Q816](#) [Q817](#) [Q818](#) [Q819](#) [Q820](#) [Q821](#) [Q822](#) [Q823](#) [Q824](#) [Q825](#) [Q826](#) [Q827](#) [Q828](#) [Q829](#) [Q830](#) [Q831](#) [Q832](#) [Q833](#) [Q834](#) [Q835](#) [Q836](#) [Q837](#) [Q838](#) [Q839](#) [Q840](#) [Q841](#) [Q842](#) [Q843](#) [Q844](#) [Q845](#) [Q846](#) [Q847](#) [Q848](#) [Q849](#) [Q850](#) [Q851](#) [Q852](#) [Q853](#) [Q854](#) [Q855](#) [Q856](#) [Q857](#) [Q858](#) [Q859](#) [Q860](#) [Q861](#) [Q862](#) [Q863](#) [Q864](#) [Q865](#) [Q866](#) [Q867](#) [Q868](#) [Q869](#) [Q870](#) [Q871](#) [Q872](#) [Q873](#) [Q874](#) [Q875](#) [Q876](#) [Q877](#) [Q878](#) [Q879](#) [Q880](#) [Q881](#) [Q882](#) [Q883](#) [Q884](#) [Q885](#) [Q886](#) [Q887](#) [Q888](#) [Q889](#) [Q890](#) [Q891](#) [Q892](#) [Q893](#) [Q894](#) [Q895](#) [Q896](#) [Q897](#) [Q898](#) [Q899](#) [Q900](#) [Q901](#) [Q902](#) [Q903](#) [Q904](#) [Q905](#) [Q906](#) [Q907](#) [Q908](#) [Q909](#) [Q910](#) [Q911](#) [Q912](#) [Q913](#) [Q914](#) [Q915](#) [Q916](#) [Q917](#) [Q918](#) [Q919](#) [Q920](#) [Q921](#) [Q922](#) [Q923](#) [Q924](#) [Q925](#) [Q926](#) [Q927](#) [Q928](#) [Q929](#) [Q930](#) [Q931](#) [Q932](#) [Q933](#) [Q934](#) [Q935](#) [Q936](#) [Q937](#) [Q938](#) [Q939](#) [Q940](#) [Q941](#) [Q942](#) [Q943](#) [Q944](#) [Q945](#) [Q946](#) [Q947](#) [Q948](#) [Q949](#) [Q950](#) [Q951](#) [Q952](#) [Q953](#) [Q954](#) [Q955](#) [Q956](#) [Q957](#) [Q958](#) [Q959](#) [Q960](#) [Q961](#) [Q962](#) [Q963](#) [Q964](#) [Q965](#) [Q966](#) [Q967](#) [Q968](#) [Q969](#) [Q970](#) [Q971](#) [Q972](#) [Q973](#) [Q974](#) [Q975](#) [Q976](#) [Q977](#) [Q978](#) [Q979](#) [Q980](#) [Q981](#) [Q982](#) [Q983](#) [Q984](#) [Q985](#) [Q986](#) [Q987](#) [Q988](#) [Q989](#) [Q990](#) [Q991](#) [Q992](#) [Q993](#) [Q994](#) [Q995](#) [Q996](#) [Q997](#) [Q998](#) [Q999](#) [Q1000](#)

960

961

962

963

964

965

966

967

968

969

970

971

972

973

974

975

976

977

978

979

980

981

982

983

984

985

986

987

988

989

990

991

992

993

994

995

996

997

998

999

1000

1001

1002

1003

1004

1005

1006

1007

1008

1009

1010

1011

1012

1013

1014

1015

1016

1017

1018

1019

1020

1021

1022

1023

1024

1025

1026

1027

1028

1029

1030

1031

1032

1033

1034

1035

1036

1037

1038

1039

1040

1041

1042

1043

1044

1045

1046

1047

1048

1049

1050

1051

1052

1053

1054

1055

1056

1057

1058

1059

1060

1061

1062

1063

1064

1065

1066

1067

1068

1069

1070

1071

1072

1073

1074

1075

1076

1077

1078

1079

1080

1081

1082

1083

1084

1085

1086

1087

1088

1089

1090

1091

1092

1093

1094

1095

1096

1097

1098

1099

1100

1101

1102

1103

1104

1105

1106

1107

1108

1109

1110

1111

<p

DECLARATION FOR UTILITY OR DESIGN PATENT APPLICATION

ATTORNEY'S DOCKET NO.: M&R 3.0-033 CIP

As a below-named inventor, I hereby declare that:

My residence, post office address and citizenship are as stated below next to my name;

I believe I am the original, first and sole inventor (if only one name is listed below) or an original, first and joint inventor (if plural names are listed below) of the subject matter which is claimed and for which a patent is sought on the invention entitled: METHOD AND SYSTEM FOR FACILITATING RESELLER TRANSACTIONS the specification of which

is attached hereto

was filed on _____ as United States Application Number or PCT International Application Number _____ and was amended on _____ (if applicable).

I hereby state that I have reviewed and understand the contents of the above-identified specification, including the claims, as amended by any amendment specifically referred to above.

I acknowledge the duty to disclose information which is material to patentability as defined in Title 37, Code of Federal Regulations, § 1.56.

I hereby claim foreign priority benefits under Title 35, United States Code, § 119(a)-(d) of any foreign application(s) for patent or inventor's certificate or § 365(a) of any PCT international application which designated at least one country other than the United States of America, listed below and have also identified below any foreign application for patent or inventor's certificate, or any PCT international application having a filing date before that of the application on which priority is claimed:

PRIOR FOREIGN APPLICATION(S)			
COUNTRY	APPLICATION NUMBER	DATE OF FILING (month, day, year)	PRIORITY CLAIMED
			YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>
			YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>
			YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>

LISTING OF FOREIGN APPLICATIONS CONTINUED ON PAGE 3 HEREOF YES NO

I hereby claim the benefit under Title 35, United States Code, § 119(e) of any United States provisional application(s) listed below:

Application Number: 60/153,183

Filing Date: September 10, 1999

Application Number: 60/214,632

Filing Date: June 28, 2000

I hereby claim the benefit under Title 35, United States Code, §120 of any United States application(s), or § 365(c) of any PCT international application designating the United States of America, listed below and, insofar as the subject matter of each of the claims of this application is not disclosed in the prior United States or PCT international application in the manner provided by the first paragraph of Title 35, United States Code, § 112, I acknowledge the duty to disclose information which is material to patentability as defined in Title 37, Code of Federal Regulations, § 1.56 which became available between the filing date of the prior application and the national or PCT international filing date of this application:

U.S. Parent Application Serial Number: 09/658,977 Parent Filing Date: September 11, 2000 Parent Patent No.:

U.S. Parent Application Serial Number: Parent Filing Date: Parent Patent No.:

PCT Parent Number: Parent Filing Date:

LISTING OF US APPLICATIONS CONTINUED ON PAGE 3 HEREOF: YES NO

POWER OF ATTORNEY: As a named inventor, I hereby appoint the following registered practitioner(s) to prosecute this application and to transact all business in the Patent and Trademark Office connected therewith: Customer Number 000530

DIRECT ALL CORRESPONDENCE TO: Customer No. 000530

DECLARATION -- Page 2

ATTORNEY DOCKET NO. M&R 3.0-033 CIP

I hereby declare that all statements made herein of my own knowledge are true and that all statements made on information and belief are believed to be true; and further, that these statements were made with the knowledge that willful false statements and the like so made are punishable by fine or imprisonment, or both, under Section 1001 of Title 18 of the United States Code and that such willful false statements may jeopardize the validity of the application or any patent issued thereon.

Full name of sole or first inventor (given name, family name): STEVEN J. SCULLER

Inventor's signature _____ Date _____

Residence: 115 Valesi Drive, Morganville, New Jersey 07751 Citizenship: USA

Post Office Address: 115 Valesi Drive, Morganville, New Jersey 07751

Full name of second joint inventor, if any (given name, family name) MITCHELL L. STEVELMAN

Second Inventor's signature _____ Date _____

Residence: 57 Bear Mountain Road, Ringwood, New Jersey 07456 Citizenship: USA

Post Office Address: 57 Bear Mountain Road, Ringwood, New Jersey 07456

Full name of third joint inventor, if any (given name, family name):

Third Inventor's signature _____ Date _____

Residence: Citizenship:

Post Office Address:

Full name of fourth joint inventor, if any (given name, family name):

Fourth Inventor's signature _____ Date _____

Residence: Citizenship:

Post Office Address:

Full name of fifth joint inventor (given name, family name):

Fifth Inventor's signature _____ Date _____

Residence: Citizenship:

Post Office Address:

Full name of sixth joint inventor, if any (given name, family name):

Sixth Inventor's signature _____ Date _____

Residence: Citizenship:

Post Office Address:

Full name of seventh joint inventor, if any (given name, family name):

Seventh Inventor's signature _____ Date _____

Residence: Citizenship:

Post Office Address:

Full name of eighth joint inventor, if any (given name, family name):

Eighth Inventor's signature _____ Date _____

Residence: Citizenship:

Post Office Address:

Additional inventors are being named on separately numbered sheets attached hereto.